

Production No. 1F13

The Simpsons

"DEEP SPACE HOMER"

Written by

David Mirkin

Created by  
Matt Groening

Developed by  
James L. Brooks  
Matt Groening  
Sam Simon

This script is not for publication or reproduction. No one is authorized to dispose of same. If lost or destroyed, please notify Script Department.  
THE WRITING CREDITS MAY NOT BE FINAL AND SHOULD NOT BE USED FOR PUBLICITY OR ADVERTISING PURPOSES WITHOUT FIRST CHECKING WITH TELEVISION LEGAL DEPARTMENT.

Return to Script Department  
20TH CENTURY FOX TELEVISION  
10201 W. Pico Boulevard  
Los Angeles, California 90035  
NOTE: FOR TABLE READ ONLY

TABLE DRAFT

Date 7/22/93

NOTE: FOR TABLE READ ONLY

"Deep Space Homer"

Cast List

HOMER.....DAN CASTELLANETA  
MARGE.....JULIE KAVNER  
BART.....NANCY CARTWRIGHT  
LISA.....YEARDLEY SMITH  
SMITHERS.....HARRY SHEARER  
GUARD #1.....HARRY SHEARER  
HOMER/SKELETON.....DAN CASTELLANETA  
CARL.....HANK AZARIA  
LENNY.....HARRY SHEARER  
BURNS.....HARRY SHEARER  
CROWD NOISE.....ALL  
MOE.....HANK AZARIA  
BARNEY.....DAN CASTELLANETA  
ARMY ANNOUNcer (V.O.)...HARRY SHEARER  
ANNOUNcer.....HANK AZARIA  
NASA ANNOUNcer #1 (V.O.)HARRY SHEARER  
NASA ANNOUNcer #2 (V.O.)DAN CASTELLANETA  
DR. BABCOCK.....HARRY SHEARER  
JACK STILLWATER.....DAN CASTELLANETA  
TRAINEE.....DAN CASTELLANETA  
TIM ALLEN TYPE.....HANK AZARIA  
PEG.....MAGGIE ROSWELL  
AL.....DAN CASTELLANETA

NERDY SCIENTIST.....DAN CASTELLANETA  
JIM WALLACE.....HARRY SHEARER  
KAREN HUNTER.....PAMELA HAYDEN  
REPORTER #1.....HANK AZARIA  
REPORTER #2.....MAGGIE ROSWELL  
ANNOUNcer (V.O.).....HARRY SHEARER  
BUZZ ALDRIN.....HANK AZARIA  
ASTRO WIFE #1.....PAMELA HAYDEN  
ASTRO WIFE #2.....MAGGIE ROSWELL  
ASTRO WIFE #3.....PAMELA HAYDEN  
KID SISTER.....NANCY CARTWRIGHT  
KID.....PAMELA HAYDEN  
FEMALE (V.O.).....MAGGIE ROSWELL  
MISSION CONTROL (V.O.)..HARRY SHEARER  
KENT BROCKMAN.....HARRY SHEARER  
GRAMPA.....DAN CASTELLANETA  
BARFLIES.....DAN/HARRY/HANK  
GUY.....DAN CASTELLANETA  
GUY #2.....HANK AZARIA  
GUY #3.....HARRY SHEARER  
EVERYBODY.....ALL  
RACE BANNON.....HANK AZARIA  
ANTS.....DAN/NANCY  
ANT #1.....DAN CASTELLANETA  
ANT #2.....NANCY CARTWRIGHT  
ANT #3.....DAN CASTELLANETA  
ANT #4.....NANCY CARTWRIGHT

JAMES TAYLOR.....DAN CASTELLANETA  
REPORTERS.....DAN/HARRY/HANK  
REPORTER.....HARRY SHEARER

"DEEP SPACE HOMER"

written by

David Mirkin

ACT ONE

FADE IN:

EXT. POWER PLANT - DAY

All the WORKERS at the plant are gathering under Mr. Burns' balcony.

SMITHERS (V.O.)

(THROUGH LOUDSPEAKER) Attention! All workers trudge immediately to the main yard for the mandatory Employee of the Week festivities.

We see the employees must file past a Total Recall type x-ray device to check for weapons. Two GUARDS watch the full length screen.

GUARD #1

(CHECKING OFF) Clean, clean, pistol, uzi, two kids posing as an adult...

As the people emerge, they are forced to throw their weapons into an overflowing bin. On the x-ray screen we see a skeleton of a Neanderthal.

GUARD #1 (CONT'D)

(RE: SKELETON, GREETING) Hey, Homer.

HOMER/SKELETON

Hey.

Homer emerges, scratching his armpit.

ANGLE ON

LENNY and CARL, who are wearing Employee of the Week medallions.

CARL

I hate these Employee of the Week award ceremonies.

LENNY

Who even cares anymore? Everyone that works here has already got one.

CARL

Except for...

Homer enters; he's the only one not wearing a medallion.

HOMER

Hello. Well, today's the day for Homer J. I know I'm gonna win this time because I've been working really hard, kissed a lot of executive butt, and here's my ace in the hole.

Homer holds up a book.

HOMER (CONT'D)

Union rule twenty-six says: (READING)  
"Every worker must win at least once whether he deserves it or not."

LENNY

Way to go, Homer.

We see Smithers up on the balcony.

## SMITHERS

Attention, everyone. Let's have an  
awed hush for Mr. Burns.

Burns steps onto the balcony.

## BURNS

Men, it is imperative that we push the  
freedom fighters out of the lowlands  
before the start of the rainy season...

Smithers whispers in Burns' ear.

## BURNS

Huh? What? (COVERING TO CROWD) And  
by that I mean, of course, it's time  
for the Employee of the Week Award. I  
can't believe we've overlooked this  
week's winner for so long. We simply  
could not function without his  
tireless, selfless efforts. So a round  
of applause for the new employee of the  
week, this inanimate carbon rod.

Burns holds up a rod. Smithers drapes the award around it.

## CROWD NOISE

(AD LIBBING) It's about time. / Way to  
go, Rod! / We love you, Rod! / Long  
overdue.

## HOMER

(FURIOUS GROWLS) Inanimate? I'll show  
him inanimate.

Homer clenches his fist in rage, but remains perfectly still for a long beat. Everyone exits the yard around him until he is all alone.

INT. SIMPSONS HOUSE - NIGHT

The Simpsons eat dinner.

HOMER

Stupid carbon rod. It's all just a popularity contest.

BART

(EXCITED) Wow! Did you actually get to see the rod?

MARGE

I'm sorry, Homer.

HOMER

Nobody respects me at work.

MARGE

Well, we respect you. (TURNS AWAY)

Lisa, today a bank offered to refinance our mortgage at 8 1/4 percent. Do you think we ought to do it?

LISA

Depends whether it's fixed or variable.

What do you think, Bart?

BART

Go for it, Mom. The Fed won't drop the prime this low again for 20 years.

HOMER

(WANTING TO JOIN IN) Yeah, Marge. The Fed, again, years.

MARGE

(PATRONIZING) That's a good point, Homer.

BART

It was?

MARGE

Bart, I've told you not to kick your father when he's down.

BART

(WHINY) But he's always down.

CUT TO:

**INT. SIMPSON HOUSE - LIVING ROOM - AFTERNOON**

A dejected Homer sits on the couch, channel grazing.

ON TV

We see cool SHOTS of TANKS, HELICOPTERS, and ARMORED VEHICLES racing along to INSPIRING MUSIC.

ARMY ANNOUNCER (V.O.)

This is today's army.

HOMER

That's it! I'll join the army. I'll be all that I can be.

We see the tanks, helicopters and armored vehicles arrive at a huge parking lot. Tarps are thrown over the vehicles. A SOLDIER dumps a sack marked "MOTH BALLS" into the top of a tank and high-fives another soldier.

ARMY ANNOUNCER (V.O.)

Today's army is rapidly downsizing.

There are no more jobs available.

Until the next war, you are all that  
you can be.

HOMER

(MOANS, THEN) Peace is hell.

Homer changes the channel on TV.

ON TV

We see a good-looking MUSCULAR MAN.

ANNOUNCER

Win the respect and admiration of your  
peers. Become a strike-breaker.

Another MAN with a board, runs over to him.

MAN

Scab!

The man hits him on the head with the board. A trickle of blood runs down the strike-breaker's face. Despite this, he smiles and gives a thumbs up.

HOMER

Nah. There must be a catch somewhere.

He flicks the remote. We see a NASA spacecraft sitting on a launch pad.

NASA ANNOUNCER #1 (V.O.)

(A LA BROKAW) It's a lovely day for a launch here in Cape Canaveral here in Florida. And the purpose of this mission is really, really fascinating.

NASA ANNOUNCER #2 (V.O.)

That's right, Jim. The lionshare of this flight will be devoted to the study of the effects of weightlessness on tiny screws.

NASA ANNOUNCER #1 (V.O.)

Wow! And of course this could have any number of commercial applications here on Earth... in everything from watch making to... watch repair.

HOMER

Boring.

He tries to flip the channel but the batteries fall out of the remote control.

HOMER (CONT'D)

(PANICKED) Nooo.

NASA ANNOUNCER #1

Let's talk about the crew for a minute.

NASA ANNOUNCER #2

They're a colorful bunch; they've been dubbed the "Three Musketeers."

NASA ANNOUNCER #1

And with good reason. There's a mathematician, a different kind of mathematician and a statistician.

NASA ANNOUNCER #2

Hey, is that a space crew or Delta house?

**HOMER TO HOMER**

Writhing on the floor, fumbling with the remote.

**HOMER**

Make it stop! Make it stop!

Bart enters.

**BART**

Dad, what's wrong? Oh no, a space  
launch! Change the channel!

**HOMER**

I can't! I can't!

Bart runs and pulls the plug out of the wall.

**HOMER/BART**

(RELIEVED SIGHS)

**CUT TO:**

**INT. MISSION CONTROL - NEXT DAY**

We open on the big map which is tracking the spacecraft. A senior scientist, DR. BABCOCK, comes up to a NASA executive, JACK STILLWATER.

**DR. BABCOCK**

Sir, we've run into a serious problem  
with the mission. Take a look at this  
data.

**STILLWATER**

Oh my God! These Nielsen ratings are  
the lowest ever.

**DR. BABCOCK**

We were beaten by an infomercial for  
aquarium gravel.

STILLWATER

Do the astronauts know?

DR. BABCOCK

Not yet.

STILLWATER

Better not tell them. They might vent  
their frustrations on the space craft.

INT. NASA - CONFERENCE ROOM

Stillwater is addressing a conference table full of NASA SCIENTISTS and PERSONNEL.

STILLWATER

Gentlemen, we're in danger of losing our funding. America isn't interested in space exploration anymore, especially since the Viking Probe failed to find any life on Mars.

CUT TO:

We see the Viking Probe sitting on the red Martian surface. A TV camera mounted on top does a slow 360 degree PAN, searching for life. Perched atop the camera is a CUDDLY ALIEN.

BACK TO SCENE

STILLWATER

We need a fresh angle to get the public interested.

Dr. Babcock takes the floor.

DR. BABCOCK

The public see our astronauts as clean-cut, athletic go-getters. They hate people like that.

ANGLE ON

A CLEAN-CUT ASTRONAUT TRAINEE squeezes a hand-grip exerciser. He slams down his glass of milk.

TRAINEE

Well who in the Sam Hill do they like?

DR. BABCOCK

Here are a few of America's most popular TV personalities.

He flicks on a TV with a remote.

A) We see a TIM ALLEN-TYPE wearing a tool belt, sitting on top of a SUPER-CHARGED riding mower.

TIM ALLEN TYPE

(TRADEMARK MACHO SHOUT)

He floors the mower and shoots backward through a fence. We hear a SCREAM.

TIM ALLEN TYPE (CONT'D)

I've killed Wilson. (TRADEMARK MACHO SOUND)

Dr. Babcock FLICKS the remote.

B) The ROSEANNE THEME MUSIC plays as the CAMERA CIRCLE DOLLIES around obese parents shoveling huge amounts of food into their mouths and LAUGHING, while the children sit in front of empty plates and watch in fear and horror. Roseanne notices the camera, eyes it hungrily, and apparently swallows it.

C) The scene changes to the "Married With Children" living room. AL and PEG are on the sofa. Peg sits next to Al who has his hand in his pants and is drinking beer.

PEG

Al, let's have sex.

AL

No.

SFX: HYSTERICAL CANNED LAUGHTER

PEG

Your feet smell.

Audience LAUGHTER. After a long pause Al reaches over to a toilet which we reveal is next to the couch and FLUSHES it. There is loud audience APPLAUSE and WHOOPING.

BACK TO SCENE

NERDY SCIENTIST

They're all a bunch of blue collar  
slobs.

STILLWATER

That's who we need for our next  
astronaut.

NERDY SCIENTIST

But how will we find such a person?

DR. BABCOCK

I suggest an exhaustive, expensive  
nationwide search.

STILLWATER

I wish there was an easier way.

The phone RINGS. Stillwater answers.

HOMER (V.O.)

Hello, is this NASA?

STILLWATER

Yes.

Homer is on a payphone at Moe's (WE INTERCUT).

HOMER

Good. (ANGRILY) Look, I'm just an ordinary working blue collar slob who likes to come home, plop down on the sofa, prop up my smelly feet, and watch TV.

STILLWATER

How did you get this number?

HOMER

Shut up. And I don't wanna see no clean-cut athletic go-getter-types making me feel bad about myself and robbing me of my dignity. Hold on a second.

SFX: TOILET FLUSH

The NASA scientists look at each other excitedly.

DR. BABCOCK

(SOTTO) Trace this call.

EXT. MOE'S BAR - NIGHT

A government car with a NASA logo pulls up in front.

INT. MOE'S BAR

Homer is on a pay phone.

HOMER

Hello, is this President Clinton?

(BEAT) Good. I bought a water softener at Sears that's leaking and since it's past ninety days, they won't take it back. Now this is where you come in.

(BEAT) Shut up.

A hand taps his shoulder.

DR. BABCOCK (V.O.)

Excuse me.

Homer SCREAMS and hangs up the phone. WIDEN to see Stillwater and Dr. Babcock.

DR. BABCOCK (CONT'D)

Are you the person that called NASA yesterday.

HOMER

(GASP) No. It wasn't me, I swear. It was... him.

Homer points at BARNEY. They walk over to Barney who's chug-a-lugging beer.

STILLWATER

Sir, how would you like to get higher than you've ever been in your life?

BARNEY

Be an astronaut? Sure.

STILLWATER

Welcome aboard. I think you will find  
this will win you the respect of your  
peers.

HOMER

Nooo! It was me! I made the crank  
call. I do it all the time. Check  
with the FBI, I have a file. I HAVE A  
FILE.

STILLWATER

(SHRUGGING) Better take both of them.

Dr. Babcock pulls out a blackjack and coldcocks Homer and Barney.

STILLWATER (CONT'D)

I don't really think that was  
necessary. They wanted to be  
astronauts.

DR. BABCOCK

I know.

FADE OUT:

END OF ACT ONE

ACT TWO

FADE IN:

INT. HOTEL BANQUET ROOM - DAY

Members of the PRESS have gathered. Stillwater is on the stage behind a podium.

STILLWATER

Ladies and gentlemen and members of the press, I'd like to present the new generation of NASA astronaut, the average American.

A curtain rises revealing Homer and Barney. Homer wears a brand new barbecue apron that says: "HAIL TO THE CHEF," and is holding a spatula. Barney wears loud golfing pants and a tam. He is leaning on a club.

JIM WALLACE

Jim Wallace, Associated Press. (BEAT)

Is this a joke?

STILLWATER

Far from it. One of these two men will prove that space travel is finally within the reach of the common man.

KAREN HUNTER

Karen Hunter, Minneapolis Star. No, really, is this a joke?

STILLWATER

(BECOMING ANNOYED) No, these two men will compete to see who has, to coin a phrase, "the correct stuff."

REPORTER #1

A question for the barbecue chef: don't you think there is an inherent danger in sending under-qualified civilians into space?

HOMER

As I see it, the only danger is if we get captured by alien bubble creatures who put us on trial for our crimes against the galaxy.

There is a stunned silence.

HOMER

As I understand it.

REPORTER #2

Excuse me, is the golfer okay?

We see Barney lies passed out on the stage in a puddle of beer.

STILLWATER

Thank you, I'm afraid that's all we have time for.

The curtain SQUEAKILY lowers.

INT. SIMPSONS' KITCHEN - EVENING

The family eats dinner.

BART

Wow! My father, an astronaut! I feel so full of... what's the opposite of shame?

MARGE

Pride?

BART

No, not that far from shame.

HOMER

(HOPEFUL) Less shame?

BART

(AFFECTIONATELY) Yeah.

HOMER

And look, I risked my life to get you  
these moon rocks.

Homer hands Lisa and Bart moon rocks.

LISA

Dad, you haven't been to the moon yet.

HOMER

Of course not, I stole them from NASA.  
They were just sitting there, under a  
nearly unbreakable glass dome.

BART

Wow, an astronaut and a thief. I love  
you, Dad.

HOMER

(TO HIMSELF) At last, the respect I've  
been craving.

MARGE

You know, Homer, when I found out about this I went through a wide range of emotions. First I was nervous, then anxious, then wary, then apprehensive, then kinda sleepy, then worried, and then concerned. But now I realize that being a spaceman is something you have to do.

HOMER

A man's gotta do what a man's gotta...

Homer's watch alarm begins BEEPING.

HOMER (CONT'D)

(LOOKS AT WATCH) Ooh, time for cartoons.

He clicks on the TV. The Itchy and Scratchy Show is on.

ON TV

We see an art card that reads "ITCHY AND SCRATCHY - SCAR TREK: THE NEXT LACERATION."

EXT. SPACE - AFTERNOON

We see a small spaceship ZOOM by.

INT. SPACESHIP - CONTINUOUS

SCRATCHY takes a last bite of a sandwich. He suddenly grimaces in pain and clutches his convulsing stomach. ITCHY pops out of his stomach a la Alien, holding the last bite of the sandwich. Scratchy SCREAMS.

Itchy throws Scratchy into the airlock and prepares to blow him into space. Scratchy zips up his spacesuit and dons a helmet just as he is SUCKED OUT into space.

**EXT. SPACE - CONTINUOUS**

The spaceship's robotic claws grab Scratchy and turn him directly toward Saturn, whose rings are spinning like a buzz saw. **SFX: BUZZ SAW.** They saw Scratchy neatly in half. He watches his pelvis and legs float away. He "swims" desperately after them, but they burn up in the atmosphere. One of the robotic claws rips off Scratchy's helmet. His head and eyeballs begin to puff up a la Total Recall. Scratchy's eyes dart back and forth, watching his head swell.

The other robotic claw takes a shiny hat pin and **POPS** his ballooning head, splattering on the pod's windshield spelling "**THE END.**"

An art card reads "**VIEWER ADVISORY.**"

**ANNOUNCER (V.O.)**

The preceding program contained scenes  
of extreme violence and should not have  
been viewed by young children.

**BACK TO SCENE**

Bart, Lisa, and Marge are **LAUGHING.**

**BART**

(LAUGHING) That was great.

We WIDEN TO SEE that Homer is drenched in sweat.

**HOMER**

(UNEASY LAUGH) It's funny 'cuz it's  
not true... right?

**EXT. CAPE CANAVERAL BASE - DAY**

The Simpsons drive past a **SENTRY** at an entrance gate. A sign reads: "CAPE CANAVERAL, FORMERLY CAPE KENNEDY, FORMERLY CAPE ARBUCKLE."

**INT. SIMPSONS CAR - CONTINUOUS**

Homer picks up a road map.

HOMER

Our base housing is... grid 6, street  
J, block 19, unit 4.

AERIAL VIEW

From above, the base is a huge grid of identical units.

MARGE (V.O.)

(PLEASED) Oooh. I hear grid 6 is one  
of the better grids.

EXT. NASA - DAY

Dr. Babcock is showing Homer and Barney around the base.  
He escorts them toward a hangar.

DR. BABCOCK

Now of course only one of you will be  
chosen to go into space, so the next  
few weeks will be a grueling series of  
tests to determine which of you is most  
qualified.

Barney raises his hand.

BARNEY

How will we know when we're in space?

HOMER

(TO DR. BABCOCK) That stupid question  
he just asked is good for me, right?

DR. BABCOCK

Oh, and Barney - for the duration of  
the training, there'll be no more beer.

He plucks a can of beer out of Barney's hand.

BARNEY

Three whole weeks with only wine? I'll go crazy.

HOMER

And may the best man win. (TO BABCOCK)  
You wrote that down about the wine,  
didn't you?

INT. SIMPSONS' BASE QUARTERS - NIGHT

We start close on a foot KICKING a wall. PULL BACK to reveal Homer LAUGHING.

MARGE

Homer, what are you doing?

HOMER

(HAPPILY) It's not our house; we can do whatever we want. It's like a rental car. Here, help me deface this painting.

MARGE

No! Homer, I really think you should watch your behavior if you want to win this competition.

HOMER

Marge, there is no competition. We're talking about Barney, here. He's a sub-human juice pump.

LISA

Dad, he's your best friend.

HOMER

And he always will be. Unless I make  
better friends once I'm an astronaut.  
(BEAT, THEN) Let's go tear up the lawn.

BART

Let's do that.

MARGE

Homer, we have to live here!

INT. NASA TRAINING FACILITY

Homer, in a training jumpsuit, is eating a donut. He comes up to Dr. Babcock.

HOMER

Well here I am, right on time. I don't see Barney, that means he's late.  
Write that down.

DR. BABCOCK

No, actually he's been here since sunrise.

He points. We see Barney working out on a speed bag. He is very coordinated.

BARNEY

Hey, Homer, since they made me stop drinking I can see colors again. For example: (POINTING) green, orange, blue, yellow, blue again.

HOMER

(TO DR. BABCOCK, DESPERATELY) I can do  
that too. (LOOKING AROUND) Awww, he  
already did all the easy ones.

CUT TO:

EXT. SIMPSON TEMPORARY BASE HOUSE - DAY

Bart and Lisa are playing catch out front.

LISA

I love Florida. It's warm in the  
winter.

BART

It's paradise.

Bart misses the ball. It rolls next to some bushes.

BART (CONT'D)

I'll get it.

Bart is just about to pick up the ball when an ALLIGATOR  
lunges out of the bushes and swallows it.

BART

(SCREAMS)

LISA (O.S.)

(SCREAMS)

ANGLE ON LISA

She is covered with mosquitos.

LISA

Agh! Mosquitos!

There is an ominous LOW RUMBLE that builds. An angry  
SNAPPING herd of FLAMINGOS comes running down the street a  
la "Jurassic Park." Bart and Lisa run from it.

**TRAINING MONTAGE**

**STIRRING RIGHT STUFF TYPE MUSIC**

- 1) Barney on the centrifuge, his face becomes highly distorted as G forces increase.
- 2) Homer on the centrifuge as G forces increase, his face becomes incredibly good-looking.
- 3) A slimmer Barney high-steps through an obstacle course of old tires. Homer follows, only the tires collect on each leg like rings on a ring-toss.
- 4) INT. WEIGHTLESS ROOM - A still slim Barney floats happily.

BARNEY

Hey, this is fun.

WIDEN to show Homer flopping around on the floor. Dr. Babcock turns a dial marked "WEIGHTLESSNESS" to maximum. Homer slowly rises a few inches from the floor and flashes Dr. Babcock the "thumbs up" sign.

DR. BABCOCK

I don't understand it. We've never had  
to use so much weightlessness before.

- 5) Homer and Barney, in their underwear, are being sprayed with high-pressure hoses by GRINNING SCIENTISTS.

HOMER

Hey, what's this for?

DR. BABCOCK

(LYING) It's for... Uh, science, Homer.

- 6) Barney is strapped in a gyro chair. It begins spinning Barney in all different directions.

BARNEY

Faster! Faster! Whee!

The chair stops spinning. Dr. Babcock comes up to him.

DR. BABCOCK

Any nausea?

BARNEY

Are you kidding? My bed used to spin  
more than that.

Barney walks off. Homer crosses past him, walks over to the chair, takes one look at it, covers his mouth and runs off.

7) Homer and Barney, in space suits, are held from behind as NASA ENGINEERS pummel them in the stomach.

8) A red-faced Barney is blowing air through liquid holding a ping pong ball afloat. Dr. Babcock is timing him. PAN over to Homer, sitting at an identical device which he is just finishing sucking dry.

SFX: EMPTY SODA CUP

HOMER

Mmmmm. Mediciney.

9) In an arena, Babcock and other SCIENTISTS sit in bleachers watching Homer and Barney fighting each other with gladiator-type weapons. They wear glowing slave collars around their necks. "STAR TREK FIGHT MUSIC" rages.

Babcock leans over to another scientist.

DR. BABCOCK

I wager 400 quatloos on the newcomer.

INT. LOCKER ROOM - DAY

We see an invigorated, happy Barney changing into street clothes. PAN OVER to see a PANTING, flushed Homer in a sweat stained flight suit.

BARNEY

Homer, you really should shower and clean up.

HOMER

I just did.

Stillwater comes up to Barney with two clean-cut astronauts.

STILLWATER

Barney, I'd like you to meet the two experienced astronauts who'll be accompanying you into space. (COYLY)  
Should you be chosen, heh-heh.

He LAUGHS and elbows Barney.

BARNEY

Hi, guys.

BUZZ

Barney, we hear you're kickin' ass.  
Looks like we'll be riding that big candle together.

HOMER

Ahem... I don't think this competition is over yet, Buzz. If that is your real name. For instance, my jaw's much stronger than Barney's. Here, hold this.

Homer hands Buzz one end of a towel. He puts the other in his mouth.

HOMER (CONT'D)

(THROUGH CLENCHED TEETH) Pull! Pull!

Homer begins GROWLING and pulling like a dog. Buzz puts up with it for a few moments, then takes his end and puts it in the mouth of a passing dog. Homer and the dog continue struggling and GROWLING. The astronauts, Stillwater and Barney quietly walk off.

## INT. BASE HOUSING - KITCHEN - DAY

Marge sits around with some ASTRONAUT WIVES. They have beehive hairdos too.

ASTRO WIFE #1

Marge, this icebox cake is scrumptious.  
I want to give you my recipe for  
Mayonnaise Pie.

MARGE

Great. I love mayonnaise.

ASTRO WIFE #2

Me too! We have a lot in common.

ASTRO WIFE #3

Yeah, we're all married to genuine  
American heroes.

At that moment, Homer appears at the window, still fighting the dog over the towel. Marge pulls down the shade.

MARGE

Sun's a little bright, isn't it?

## EXT. NASA GYM - NEXT DAY

HOMER

Look, Barney, I know I got caught up in this competition and I did a couple of really sleazy, underhanded things. Now that it's clear they didn't work, I'd like to apologize.

BARNEY

Apology accepted.

HOMER

And if by some wild chance they do pick  
me, and I don't come back, take care of  
Marge for me. (BEAT) Financially.

BARNEY

Sure. And if it's me, I know I don't  
have a wife or kids, but there's a  
mushroom growing on my shower mat that  
I've become quite fond of.

HOMER

(SOLEMN) I'll take care of him. I  
swear it.

BARNEY

Thanks. His name is "Mushy."

Stillwater enters with Dr. Babcock.

STILLWATER

Homer, Barney, it's been a tough  
decision.

Dr. Babcock suppresses a SARCASTIC LAUGH.

STILLWATER (CONT'D)

But we've decided to go with Barney.

HOMER

(HEARTFELT) Congratulations, Barney.

STILLWATER

That's very gracious of you, Homer.  
Please join us in a toast.

He pulls out a bottle of champagne.

STILLWATER / DR. BABCOCK

To the mission.

Barney takes one sip. He gets a crazed look in his eye.

BARNEY

(OMINOUSLY) It begins.

He grabs the bottle and starts to chug-a-lug.

STILLWATER / BABCOCK

(AD LIBBING) No! / Please! / For God  
sake!

Stillwater and Babcock try to wrestle the bottle away from Barney who easily sweeps them aside. He straps on a nearby jet pack and FLIES off.

BARNEY

(BAD CHARGE) Ta da da dum da da!

DR. BABCOCK

I don't understand it. That was non-alcoholic champagne.

STILLWATER

(SIGHS) Well, Homer. I guess you're the winner by default.

HOMER

(JUBILANT) Default! Woo hoo! The sweetest two words in the English language. (CHANTING AND DANCING) De-fault! De-fault! De-

Dr. Babcock KNOCKS him cold with the blackjack.

STILLWATER

(RE: BLACKJACK) Where'd you get that,  
anyway?

DR. BABCOCK

Sent away.

EXT. NASA - DAY

We see the spacecraft on the launch pad.

INT. NASA CORRIDOR - CONTINUOUS

Triumphant MUSIC plays as Homer and the two astronauts in full space suits walk toward us in heroic slow motion. They get closer and closer until finally just Homer's face fills the screen. He looks up at the impossibly tall spacecraft.

HOMER

(LOW SLO-MO VOICE) Nooooo!

Homer suddenly pops out of slow motion and runs quickly away. He jumps over a fence in the distance.

EXT. EVERGLADES

Homer runs through the underbrush. NASA men with flashlights fan out through the woods, looking for him. We do not see their leader's face, only that he has dangling keys hanging from his belt.

HOMER

(TERRIFIED OUT OF BREATH) Got to call  
Marge. Got to phone home. Phone home.

EXT. SUBURBAN HOUSE - NIGHT - ESTABLISHING

SHALLOW BREATHING comes from a shed in the yard. A kid walks slowly forward with a flashlight. We hear the SMALL NOISES of a terrified Homer.

INT. SUBURBAN HOUSE - KID'S ROOM - LATER

A 10-YEAR-OLD BOY, with his LITTLE SISTER and BROTHER, opens the door to his closet, revealing Homer cowering inside eating some food.

KID SISTER

Neat.

KID

(RE: HOMER) I'm keeping him.

INT. SIMPSON TEMPORARY BASE HOUSE

The phone is RINGING. Marge answers it.

MARGE

Hello, Simpsons' temporary base house.

INTERCUT BETWEEN KID'S CLOSET AND HOUSE

HOMER

Marge, don't tell the kids, but I kinda ran away.

MARGE

Oh is that what happened? We've been trying to watch the launch for the last four hours but they've just been playing patriotic music.

HOMER

Marge, I don't really want to go through with this... But being an astronaut is how I got you to respect me.

MARGE

(SINCERE) Homer, when I married you, you weren't an astronaut. You didn't even know how to use a Touchtone. But I still respected you, and I always will, no matter what you do.

SFX: TOUCHTONE PHONE KEYS

MARGE (CONT'D)

(MILDLY ANNOYED) Homer, you already dialed.

HOMER

Oh. (WHINY) But if I don't go I'll feel like a quitter, and then I won't respect me. Like that time when I was fourteen and they opened a new roller coaster, the "Splatterhorn." I was gonna be the first one to ride it. But when the moment came, I chickened out and ran away.

MARGE

Homer, that coaster derailed and everyone on it was severely injured.

HOMER

Yeah, and they all got big cash  
settlements... (REALIZING) You know  
what that money got them? The respect  
of their peers. That's it, Marge. I'm  
gonna do it.

MARGE

I'm very proud of you, Homer.

HOMER

Thanks Marge.

He hangs up.

HOMER

(HEROICALLY) For the first time in a  
long while, I feel like a man.

PULL BACK TO see Homer is fiddling with a toy in his lap.

KID

Can I have my toy back?

HOMER

(GRUFFLY) Soon.

He pulls the string.

FEMALE (V.O.)

The cow goes Mooooo.

HOMER

Hee, hee. It's fun and I'm learning.

FADE OUT.

END OF ACT TWO

ACT THREE

FADE IN:

EXT. CAPE CANAVERAL - DAY

We see the rocket sitting on the launch pad.

MISSION CONTROL (V.O.)

T-minus three minutes till lift off and  
counting.

INT. SPACE CRAFT - CONTINUOUS

We see Buzz Aldrin and Race Bannon going over a checklist.

BUZZ

Mission control, this is Corvair,  
launch sequence initiated. All systems  
go.

MISSION CONTROL (V.O.)

Roger, Corvair. Looking good. How's  
your cargo?

Buzz looks behind him at Homer who is strapped in a dark corner.

HOMER

Are we there yet? I'm thirsty.

BUZZ

Permission to sedate cargo ahead of  
schedule.

MISSION CONTROL (V.O.)

Permission denied.

RACE

Experiment checklist. Top Secret:

Department of Defense experiment.

Check. Moderately Secret: Department  
of Housing experiment. Check. Ant  
farm. Check.

HOMER

You know the best thing about these  
spacesuits is you can go to the  
bathroom anytime anywhere.

Homer sits quietly for a few beats.

BUZZ

Homer, you're not wearing one of those  
suits.

Homer continues to sit there silently.

INT. SIMPSONS' BASE HOUSING LIVING ROOM - SIMULTANEOUS

We see Marge, the kids, Patty, Selma, and Grampa watching  
the launch coverage.

ON TV

We see Kent Brockman.

KENT BROCKMAN

(FILLING TIME) And, the countdown continues, here at the space center... on this sunny day. The sun is shining brightly... Of course, the astronauts will not be going to the sun... For its surface is too hot. (PAUSE) I understand they will be using Arabic numbers in the countdown... six, two, nine, and so on; though not necessarily in that order.

GRAMPA

I want to watch "The Scarecrow and Mrs. King."

MARGE

Grampa, they're shooting your son up into space in three minutes.

GRAMPA

(SADLY) I may not have three minutes.

EXT. LAUNCHPAD - DAY

We see the rocket on the launchpad.

MISSION CONTROL (V.O.)

Three, two, one, make rocket go now.

The rocket begins to lift off.

INT. SPACECRAFT - CONTINUOUS

We see Buzz and Race bracing themselves against the G-forces. PAN OVER to Homer who holds a roll of stamps up to his face.

HOMER

These rare stamps are going to be worth  
even more once they've been in space.

The G-forces slowly start to push Homer's hand toward his mouth.

HOMER

Noooo! (GULP)

INT. MOE'S

Barney and the barflies are watching the launch on TV.  
Barney lifts up his glass in a toast.

BARNEY

This one's for you, Homer.

MOE & BARFLIES

Here, here.

BARNEY

(LOOKING AROUND) Hey, where is Homer  
anyway?

ON TV

The rocket climbs higher into the sky.

BROCKMAN (V.O.)

... And congratulations to  
Springfield's own Homer Simpson, the  
nation's first average man in space.

A picture of Homer appears with the name "HOMER SIMPSON"  
flashing below it. We PULL BACK to see Smithers and Burns  
watching TV.

BURNS

Who is that man, Smithers?

Smithers points to the name on the screen.

SMITHERS

(CURTLY) Homer Simpson, sir.

BURNS

What a coup it would be to have a man  
like that working here at the plant.

SMITHERS

Excuse me, sir.

Smithers steps out of the room.

SMITHERS (O.S.)

(EXASPERATED SCREAM)

Smithers re-enters calmly.

SMITHERS

Yes it would, sir.

INT. LIVING ROOM - CONTINUOUS

We see a normal looking GUY watching TV.

GUY

Wow, an average guy like me in space.

NASA is allright.

INT. ANOTHER LIVING ROOM - CONTINUOUS

Another GUY is watching TV.

GUY #2

Wow, a regular guy in space. This  
inspires me to change my life.

We PULL BACK to see he is in a jail cell with a sign that  
reads "DEATH ROW." He runs to the bars.

GUY #2 (CONT'D)

Guard! Guard! For my last meal,  
change that steak to a veggie burger.

**INT. YET ANOTHER LIVING ROOM - CONTINUOUS**

Yet another GUY watches TV.

GUY #3

Finally, they send up an ordinary guy  
like me.

With intense, telekinetic glances around the room, he closes all the shutters and windows a la Carrie. He then stares at some logs in his fireplace which BURST into flame.

**INT. NASA MISSION CONTROL - CONTINUOUS**

Dr. Babcock walks over to Stillwater.

DR. BABCOCK

Sir, the TV ratings for the launch are  
the highest in ten years.

EVERYBODY

(CHEERS)

STILLWATER

How's the spacecraft doing?

DR. BABCOCK

I don't know. All this equipment is  
just used to measure TV ratings.

**INT. SPACESHIP - CONTINUOUS**

Homer is floating, looking out a window. Buzz and Race are eating out of foil tubes that say "CHICKEN SANDWICH."

HOMER

Hey, I can see my house from here.

BUZZ

Homer, that's Greece.

HOMER

Mmm, grease. Which reminds me...

He holds up a big bag of potato chips.

HOMER (CONT'D)

Look what I smuggled aboard.

BUZZ

Homer, no!

Homer rips open the bag. Chips and crumbs explode all over the cabin and float everywhere.

RACE

Dear God, they're ranch style!

Buzz puts his hands over his eyes.

BUZZ

(IN PAIN) Ahh! Paprika!

HOMER

(TAUNTING) Oooh, look at the big strong astronauts, afraid of a delicious snack food. I'll take care of this.

Homer pushes off from a wall and floats through the air CHOMPING potato chips. The BLUE DANUBE begins to PLAY. Homer approaches a floating chip and begins to rotate with it in perfect sync. He eats it and moves onto another one. Homer continues to float along gracefully, but then looks forward.

**HOMER POV**

He is headed directly for a large glass panel marked "EXPERIMENTAL ANT COLONY."

HOMER

(SCREAM)

As he yells, he sprays chips. He tries futilely to back pedal. In unison, all of the ants look over toward Homer.

**ANTS POV**

Homer's face growing grotesquely huge.

ANTS

. (UPSET SQUEAKING)

ANT #1

SUBTITLE: PROTECT THE QUEEN!

ANT #2

SUBTITLE: WHICH ONE'S THE QUEEN?

ANT #3

SUBTITLE: I'M THE QUEEN.

ANT #4

SUBTITLE: NO YOU'RE NOT.

Just as the MUSIC crescendos, Homer CRASHES into the ant farm. The spacecraft is now filled with potato chips, sand, and ants.

ANTS

(UPSET SQUEAKING)

SUBTITLE: FREEDOM! HORRIBLE, HORRIBLE FREEDOM!

BUZZ

Homer, you've ruined the most important experiment of the mission. Now we may never know if ants can be trained to sort tiny screws in space.

HOMER

We've gotta do something, they're eating my chips. Segmented bastards!

MISSION CONTROL (V.O.)

Good news, gentlemen, we have quite a treat for you. We've been able to coax superstar James Taylor here to wish you well and play you a little of his own brand of laid back adult contemporary music.

HOMER

Wow! Former president James Taylor. This is a treat.

JAMES TAYLOR (V.O.)

How ya doin', fellas?

BUZZ

With all due respect, Mr. Taylor, this isn't the best time for your unique brand of bittersweet folk rock. We have a potentially critical situation here.

INT. MISSION CONTROL - CONTINUOUS

We see JAMES TAYLOR standing with Dr. Babcock.

DR. BABCOCK

It's true, I don't like these ant levels one bit.

Dr. Babcock looks at a meter labeled "ANTS IN AIR." The needle is well into the "unacceptable" zone.

BUZZ

(TO JAMES) I'm sure you understand.

Could you give us a half hour?

## JAMES TAYLOR

Listen, Aldrin, I'm not as laid back as  
people think. Now here's the deal:  
I'm gonna play and you're gonna float  
there and like it.

James Taylor begins **PLAYING** "You Got a Friend."

## JAMES TAYLOR (CONT'D)

(SINGING) When you're down and troubled  
and you need a helping hand and nothing  
is going right. Just close your eyes  
and think of me and soon I will be  
there... (etc)

## INT. SPACESHIP - CONTINUOUS

We see Homer and the astronauts floating in a mess of chips and ants, listening to the MUSIC coming out of a small speaker.

## INT. SIMPSONS' BASE HOUSING LIVING ROOM - CONTINUOUS

The family watches TV.

## ON TV

We see Kent Brockman.

## KENT BROCKMAN

We're just about to get our first  
pictures from inside the spacecraft  
with "Average-naut" Homer Simpson.

A TV shot from inside the spacecraft appears. Homer and the astronauts float in the midst of ants and chips, while James Taylor **PLAYS** in the background. An ant floats directly in front of the lens, making it look gigantic. Kent Brockman and the Simpsons **SCREAM**. The picture from space is suddenly cut off.

KENT BROCKMAN

(CALMLY) Ladies and gentlemen, we've just lost the picture, but what we've seen speaks for itself. The Corvair spacecraft has apparently been taken over, conquered, if you will, by a master race of giant space ants. It is difficult to tell whether they will consume the captive Earthmen or merely enslave them. But one thing is for certain, there is no stopping them; the ants will soon be here. And I, for one, welcome our new insect overlords. And I would like to remind them that as a trusted TV personality, I can be helpful in rounding up others to toil in their underground sugar caves.

A mortise appears with a giant ant wearing pants and wielding a whip over cowering humans slaves.

~~BACK TO SCENE~~

LISA

Aw, he freaked out the same way when that cow wandered in front of the President's motorcade.

MARGE

Don't worry, I'm sure your father's all right. (CONCERNED MURMUR)

**INT. SPACECRAFT - A LITTLE LATER**

James Taylor is singing "Fire and Rain."

JAMES TAYLOR

Hours of time on the telephone line /  
to talk about things to come. / Sweet  
dreams, and flying machines, in pieces  
on the ground... (REALIZES; STOPS  
SINGING) Oops, sorry. How about  
"Frozen Man?"

RACE

Oh my god! The ants are shorting out  
our navigation system!

We see a panel smoking and SPARKING. The ship lurches from side to side, throwing the astronauts with it a la "Lost in Space." For some reason, Homer is flung in the opposite direction from the others.

**CLOSE UP - MISSION CONTROL ANT METER**

The needle is now bent. We PULL BACK to see a horrified Dr. Babcock and Stillwater.

DR. BABCOCK

How ironic, nature's smallest creature  
endangers the lives of nature's largest  
creature.

STILLWATER

Are you sure you're a scientist?

JAMES TAYLOR

Ants, huh? We had quite a severe ant problem at the Vineyard this year. What we did was create a total vacuum outside the house and blow the ants out the front door. But I'm sure our resort town ways are of no interest to you high-tech NASA people.

DR. BABCOCK

Quiet, you.

STILLWATER

Wait a minute, this lanky tunesmith just may be on to something.

INT. SPACECRAFT - LATER

Homer, Buzz and Race have donned spacesuits.

BUZZ

All right, brace yourselves. I'm going to blow the hatch in three, two, one.

The hatch flies open. All the ants and other debris are immediately sucked out. Homer is hanging on to the control panel. He raises his hands in victory.

HOMER

Eat space, ants! (THEN REALIZES) Uh-oh.

Homer is sucked out the hatch. He grabs the door handle which starts to bend.

INT. NASA MISSION CONTROL

Stillwater and Babcock are watching on the monitor.

STILLWATER

Oh my god! This is a disaster.

Stillwater and Babcock turn and glare at James Taylor.

JAMES TAYLOR

Gotta go!

He drops his guitar with a FLANG and sprints out.

INT. SPACECRAFT - CONTINUOUS

Homer is holding onto the door handle which is beginning to bend. The Astronauts grab him just as the handle SNAPS off.

BUZZ

Homer, you broke the handle. With that hatch open, we can't reenter the atmosphere to get back to Earth.

A red light on Race's spacesuit begins to blink.

RACE

And we're running out of air.

HOMER

Sure. Blame me for everything. Who smashed the ant farm? Wait. Bad example.

Buzz and Race advance on him menacingly.

DR. BABCOCK

Buzz, Race, I implore you. Don't resort to violence. (BEAT) Although you are outside the jurisdiction of earth law.

Homer backs away from them, groping desperately for a weapon and pulls a pipe from the wall.

HOMER

Ah-ha!

He brandishes the bar, raising it over his head for a crashing blow. It gets lodged in the broken door handle socket. Tugging on the bar to try to free it, he pulls the door shut.

HOMER

(STRUGGLING) Stupid bar. Stuck in door. Must pull loose.

BUZZ

No Homer. If that bar holds, we might just make it back to earth.

HOMER

I'll bash you good.

Homer continues trying to pull the bar free. The astronauts must wrestle him away from the door.

CUT TO:

ON TV

KENT BROCKMAN

Well, this reporter was possibly a little hasty earlier and would like to reaffirm his allegiance to this country and its human president. It may not be perfect, but it's still the best government we have. (BEAT--EYES DARTING) For now. (TO OFF CAMERA) What? Oh.

We WIDEN to see a hastily made cardboard sign that reads "HAIL ANTS." He tears it down.

KENT BROCKMAN (CONT'D)

(OFF-HANDEDLY SKIMMING NOTES) By the way, the spacecraft is still in extreme danger. ...May not make it back.  
Attempting risky reentry... Etcetera.

**EXT. SPACE**

The spacecraft is hurtling into the upper ionosphere and is SPARKING and glowing bright red.

**INT. SPACECRAFT - CONTINUOUS**

We see the hatch and bar vibrating wildly. We PAN over to see Buzz and Race bravely HUMMING "The Battle Hymn of the Republic." We PAN from them over to Homer.

HOMER

(SINGING) Oh, those Golden Grahams/ Oh,  
those Golden Grahams/ Crispy Crunchy  
Graham cereal brand new breakfast  
treat.

CUT TO:

**INT. SIMPSON HOUSE - LIVING ROOM**

Marge is watching a NASA simulation of the spacecraft's reentry.

MARGE

Come on, Homie, you can make it.

GRAMPA

Of course he'll make it. It's TV.

**INT. SPACECRAFT - LATER**

They are on the ground. Buzz opens the hatch. They are immediately besieged by reporters.

REPORTERS

(AD-LIBBING) Are you okay? How did you do it? Did you see me waving to you up there? Is Madonna pregnant?

REPORTER

How did you solve the door problem?

BUZZ

(GENEROUSLY) Homer Simpson was the real hero here. He jury-rigged the door closed using this.

REPORTER

What is that?

HOMER

Just an inanimate carbon rod.

Homer holds up the rod for all to see. Flashbulbs pop. We ZOOM IN on just the hand holding the rod.

MATCH DISSOLVE  
TO:

The cover of TIME MAGAZINE. Only the rod, not Homer, has made the cover of the magazine. The headline reads: "In Rod We Trust."

ON TV

We see the rod is being given a huge ticker-tape parade. PULL BACK to see Homer watching the parade. He FLICKS off the TV, disgusted.

BART

(DISAPPOINTED) Aww, they were just about to show some closeups of the rod.

HOMER

What a gyp. I risked my life getting shot up into space and I still don't get any respect. I mean, how many guys get to go eighteen thousand miles an hour... How many people have seen the ice caps and the deserts all at once... How many people have seen the beauty of the northern lights from one hundred miles above?

LISA

(ENTHRALLED) What did it look like, Dad?

BART

Yeah.

HOMER

I can't begin to describe it.

BART/LISA

(IMPRESSED) Wow.

HOMER

But I'll try. It's like when you bang your head real hard... say, when you fall off of a stool... or when you walk into a door... or when you use a bicycle as a ladder...

During the above speech WE PAN UP from Homer through the roof of the house, high into space where we see the Fox Satellite orbiting the earth. A sign reads: "DANGER - RADIOACTIVE MATERIALS."

We get closer and see the satellite is covered with ants who are eating it. Each time they bite, an electric bolt SHOOTS through them making them grow larger and larger. Soon the picture flickers, then goes to fuzz.

END OF ACT THREE